PSYCHOLOGICAL HOPE AND ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: THE NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

This research investigates the correlation between employees' psychological hope and their organisational commitment. The study utilizes a sample of 280 managerial and non-managerial employees, randomly select-ed from five purposefully chosen major oil and gas companies in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Employ-ing a quasi-experimental research design, data collection was conducted through a cross-sectional survey, which is deemed most suitable for the administrative sciences. Data analysis was performed using the Spear-man rank correlation coefficient utilizing the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The results reveal a noteworthy and positive association between employees' psychological hope and organisa-tional commitment within the major oil and gas companies in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Specifically, employees' willpower and way power were identified as having a positive and statistically significant impact on their affective, normative, and continuance commitments within these organisations. In light of these find-ings, the study concludes that employees' psychological hope significantly contributes to enhancing organisa-tional commitment within major oil and gas companies in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. It particularly emphasises the pivotal roles of employees' willpower (agency) and way power (pathways) in increasing their affective, normative, and continuance commitments within these organisations. Consequently, it underscores the necessity for managers of oil and gas companies in Nigeria to effectively manage employees' psychologi-cal hope to strengthen their commitment to the organisation. Moreover, the study discusses additional theo-retical and managerial implications for fostering employees' hope in the workplace, with specific reference to the Nigerian oil and gas sector.

Keywords: Niger Delta Region, Nigeria, Oil and Gas Industry, Organizational Commitment, Positive Psychological Capital, Psychological Hope.

Introduction

A significant trend has emerged amid the global economic downturn and increasing competition: employees increasingly seek employment opportunities elsewhere, motivated by more favourable prospects. This phenomenon is underscored by Martin and Schmidt (2010), who assert, "Despite what you might think, the downturn has made your highest-potential employees more likely to jump ship: one in four plans to leave your firm within the year."

Consequently, enterprise managers, scholars, policymakers, and analysts have turned their attention to the erosion of workers' commitment to their jobs and organisations, positioning organisational commitment as a central area of inquiry. This exploration encompasses various cultural and occupational contexts, with researchers striving to elucidate its antecedents and consequences (Randall, 1993; Mowday et al., 1982; Welsch and LaVan, 1981).

The management literature has proffered multiple interpretations of organisational commitment. One definition characterises it as "an employee's strong belief in and acceptance of an organisation's goals and values, willingness to expend effort on behalf of the organisation to reach these goals and objectives, and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organisation" (Hunt and Morgan, 1994). This definition implies that organisational commitment mirrors employees' attitudes towards their affiliations with their organisations (Moorhead & Gryphon, 1995). In a related perspective, Luthans (1992) posits that organisational commitment encompasses the propensity to maintain organisational membership, the readiness to exert considerable effort for the organisation, and a profound belief in and endorsement of its goals and values. The critical role of employees in the efficient and effective functioning of any enterprise cannot be overstated (Benedict et al., 2011). Without their contributions, a company's success may be jeopardised. Consequently, a manager's responsibilities extend beyond merely attracting top talent; they must also identify employees likely to remain in the long term within a challenging environment (Benedict et al., 2011).

Citing the U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, Benedict et al. (2011) note a trend whereby employees typically remain with organisations for an average of 23 to 24 months. They also reference the Employment Policy Foundation, which estimates that the cost of losing an employee averages approximately $15,000. These costs encompass separation expenses, administrative tasks, unemployment claims, vacancy costs such as overtime or temporary staffing, recruitment advertising, interview processes, relocation, training, and the productivity loss associated with departing employees. Creating an engaging workplace environment cultivates satisfied, motivated, and empowered individuals while concurrently reducing turnover and absenteeism rates. Such an environment fosters personal and professional development, nurturing harmony and encouragement across all organisational levels, with positive ripple effects permeating throughout the company.

Previous efforts to comprehend this persistent issue and its accompanying challenges have primarily examined a range of influencing factors. These factors include (1) external elements such as remuneration, working conditions, and interpersonal relations among coworkers (Warsi et al., 2009), as well as work-family climate (O'Neill et al., 2009); (2) individual characteristics encompassing age, tenure, gender (Khalili, 2012; Cohen, 1993), educational attainment, and hierarchical position within the organisation (Wahn, 1998); and (3) factors associated with employees' experiential domains, such as job satisfaction (Lumley et al., 2011), employee involvement (Guest et al., 1993), and expectations (Van Vuuren, 2006; Jusoh et al., 2011). In this context, there is an evident necessity for innovative perspectives and methodologies. Luthans (2007) advocates for managers and organisations to broaden their scope beyond human capital to integrate the often-overlooked psychological capacities of employees, which are vital for enduring performance as well as considerations related to

employee satisfaction and organisational commitment. He posits the importance of recognizing employees' states of hopefulness, optimism, resilience, and confidence— attributes that may often be disregarded.

This highlights the significance of cultivating hopefulness within organisational environments alongside other psychological capacities. Research indicates that hope is directly related to adjustment and well-being (Snyder, 2002) and positively influences academic and athletic achievements. In professional contexts, empirical evidence suggests that individuals with elevated hope levels exhibit lower reactivity to stressors when compared to their less hopeful counterparts (Snyder, 2002; Chang and DeSimone, 2001). Furthermore, hope plays a critical role in moderating the impact of stressful life events (Snyder, 2002). From these analyses, it is evident that fostering hopefulness and commitment among employees confers a competitive advantage for organisations. This trend may elucidate the growing emphasis on research about positive psychological capital, particularly concerning hope and organisational commitment. This increase in scholarly inquiry within the organisational domain signifies a noteworthy advancement in the sociology of knowledge.

Despite the extensive exploration of these themes, specific gaps persist. First, there is a noticeable lack of studies examining the correlation between psychological hope and employees' commitment to their organisations. Second, reviewing the relevant literature indicates that research on positive psychological capital, particularly hope, has predominantly occurred within Western contexts (e.g., Luthans et al., 2007). Consequently, these findings' applicability to African, specifically Nigerian, work environments and cultures remains uncertain. To enhance the relevance of research findings for Nigerian organisations, it is imperative that scholars conduct studies within Nigerian contexts. Addressing this gap, the current study investigates the impact of employees' psychological hope on organisational commitment in the Nigerian oil and gas industry. Given the increasing competition in this sector, where managers frequently engage in talent poaching and aggressive recruitment strategies, this research's central question is: Is there a relationship between employees' psychological hope and organisational commitment?
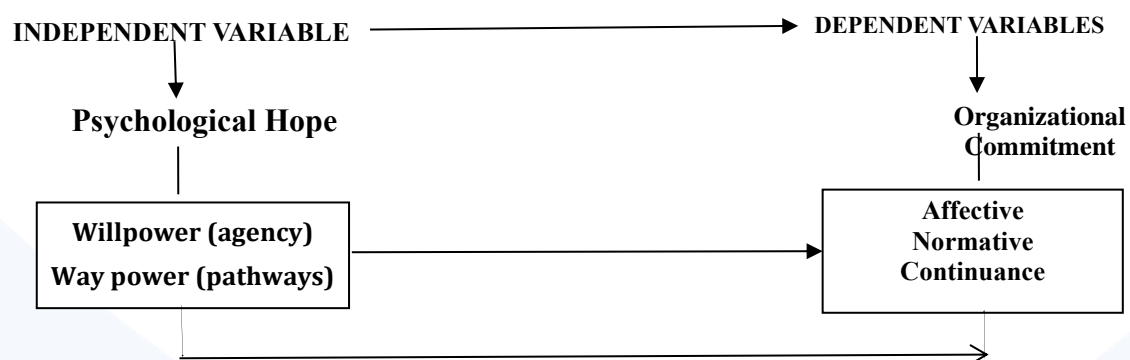
Source: conceptualized by the researchers

Figure 1.1: A Framework for Analyzing the Relationship between Psychological Capital of Hope and Organization Commitment.

2.0   REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Concept of Psychological Hope

Hope is a critical component of positive psychological capital (PsyCap), a concept introduced by Fred Luthans and his colleagues (Zhong, 2007). Luthans defines PsyCap as a positive, state-like capacity extensively examined theoretically and empirically (Zhong, 2007). According to Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007), psychological capital refers to "an individual's positive psychological state of development," characterised by four key attributes: confidence (self-efficacy) in addressing and persisting through challenging tasks; optimism in maintaining positive expectations for both current and future success; hope in striving toward goals and adapting strategies to achieve them; and resilience in coping with adversity and recovering to attain success (Luthans et al., 2007). Therefore, PsyCap encompasses self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resilience as its foundational dimensions. Research indicates that integrating these dimensions forms a second-order core factor that more effectively predicts performance and satisfaction than measuring each factor independently (Luthans et al., 2007). PsyCap aims to cultivate a positive orientation in organisational behaviour by satisfying the criteria of being positive, theoretically grounded, measurable, developmental, and performance-oriented (Luthans et al., 2007). Furthermore, PsyCap is conceived, assessed, and nurtured as a state-like positive core construct, wherein the individual resources of self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience synergistically enhance its development and expression.

Hope is an emotional disposition that fosters confidence in favourable outcomes regarding life's challenges. It embodies the notion of "anticipating the fulfilment of desires with reasonable assurance" or "enthusiastically looking forward to positive outcomes" (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia). In other words, hope is about "nurturing aspirations with eager anticipation," "yearning with an expectation of realisation," or "awaiting with a sense of conviction" (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia). The term 'hope' functions as both a noun and a verb in English, consistently retaining these meanings (Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia). Hope has also been described as "a constructive motivational state originating from an interactive fusion of perceived efficacy in goal attainment (agency) and the strategic planning of pathways to achieve those goals" (Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991). It represents the belief that future circumstances will improve, grounded not in mere wishful thinking but in genuine conviction, even without empirical evidence.

Hope encompasses a broad spectrum of beliefs, from a student aspiring to achieve an A in mathematics to an individual with HIV/AIDS seeking a cure despite the lack of immediate scientific advancements. While the theoretical depth and research surrounding hope may not be as extensive as that of confidence, it has consistently been recognised as a significant contributor to positive psychological capital in workplace settings. Despite its similarities to other attributes such as optimism, confidence, and resilience, rigorous theoretical and measurement analyses affirm its conceptual uniqueness and discriminant validity. Notably, the distinctive aspect of hope's "way power" differentiates it from traditional interpretations and other dimensions of psychological capital. Empirical studies have established a direct link between hope, adjustment, and overall well-being (Snyder, 2002). These connections have been documented across various contexts, including within-person analyses (Snyder et al.,

1996) and between-person studies (Snyder et al., 1991). The robustness of these associations has been demonstrated across clinical and non-clinical populations, encompassing children, adolescents, and adults (e.g., Edwards, Rand, Lopez, & Snyder, in Snyder and Lopez 2002). In organisational settings, research indicates that individuals with elevated levels of hope tend to exhibit lower reactivity to stress compared to those with diminished levels (Chang & DeSimone, 2001; Snyder, 2002). Furthermore, substantial evidence underscores hope's positive impact on academic and athletic performance and its critical role in mitigating the effects of stressful life events (Snyder, 2002). However, a limited number of studies have directly and indirectly examined hope's implications within workplace contexts (including Adams et al., 2003, and Peterson and Luthans, 2003).

Willpower, often regarded as the ability to regulate thoughts, emotions, and behaviours to achieve long-term goals, has garnered significant attention in positive psychology. Within the framework of psychological capital—comprising the positive psychological resources individuals employ to thrive and succeed—willpower emerges as a critical component closely linked with hope. Research by Snyder and colleagues (1991) identified hope as an essential element of psychological capital, characterised by agency (the determination to pursue goals) and pathways (the capacity to identify means to achieve those goals). Willpower complements these dimensions by providing the cognitive and behavioural perseverance necessary to overcome obstacles and setbacks to achieve desired outcomes (Snyder et al., 1991; Duckworth et al., 2007). This synergistic relationship posits that individuals with higher levels of willpower are more likely to sustain hopeful attitudes, persist through challenges, and ultimately attain their goals, thereby enhancing their overall psychological capital. Recent empirical studies have elucidated the interplay between willpower and hope within the construct of psychological capital. Research indicates that individuals with higher levels of willpower tend to exhibit enhanced levels of hope, as they possess the resilience and self-control necessary to sustain optimistic beliefs and pursue desired futures, even under adverse conditions (Duckworth & Seligman, 2005; Luthans et al., 2007). Furthermore, interventions that augment willpower have demonstrated efficacy in increasing hope among individuals confronting various challenges, from academic pursuits to health-related objectives (Duckworth et al., 2011; Rand et al., 2014). These findings underscore the significance of willpower as an integral component of psychological capital, wherein its cultivation fosters personal resilience and achievement and nurtures the hopeful outlooks essential for navigating the complexities and uncertainties of life.

Way power, closely related to willpower, constitutes a fundamental component of psychological capital in the context of hope. Grounded in Snyder's Hope Theory (1991), which conceptualises hope as consisting of agency and pathways, way power refers to the cognitive and behavioural capacity to develop and pursue effective strategies for attaining desired goals. Individuals exhibiting high levels of way power excel in identifying and utilising resources, problem-solving, and adapting to challenges encountered during their goal-pursuit journeys (Snyder et al., 1991; Luthans et al., 2007). Research emphasises the pivotal role of way power in fostering hopeful outlooks, as individuals possessing this attribute demonstrate greater resilience and efficacy in overcoming obstacles, thus enhancing their overall psychological capital. Empirical investigations have illuminated the complex nature of way power within the

framework of hope. Research indicates that individuals with elevated levels of waypower are more likely to maintain optimistic attitudes and exhibit persistence when confronted with setbacks, leading to higher goal achievement rates and improved subjective well-being (Snyder et al., 1991; Rand et al., 2014). Interventions designed to strengthen way power, such as cognitive-behavioural techniques and skills training, have proven effective in enhancing hope levels across various populations, including students and individuals addressing health-related challenges (Duckworth et al., 2011; Seligman et al., 2006). These findings accentuate the importance of way power as a critical element of psychological capital, catalysing goal-directed behaviour and promoting hopeful trajectories in individuals' lives.

The Concept of Organisational Commitment

Numerous interpretations of organisational commitment exist in management literature. It is often defined as the intensity of an employee's sense of duty towards an organisation's mission. The widely accepted dimensions include affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991).

Affective Commitment: Among the organisational commitment facets, affective commitment (AC) has gained the most attention (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer et al., 2002). AC refers to an individual's emotional connection with the organisation, marked by identification, engagement, and satisfaction in membership (Allen & Meyer, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1997; Mowday et al., 1982). This reflects emotional allegiance and active participation stemming from positive feelings toward the organisation. Researchers have conceptualised organisational commitment as the degree of an individual's identification with a specific organisation (Mowday et al., 1979; Porter et al., 1976).

Continuance Commitment: Some scholars argue that affective factors hold minimal significance. Here, commitment is viewed as a tendency to maintain consistent behaviour patterns (Becker, 1960), based on awareness of "costs" associated with leaving (Becker, 1960; Farrel and Rusbult, 1981). Factors include relationships with colleagues, pension benefits, and career advancements. Employees may remain due to perceived losses, as continuance commitment hinges on the costs of exiting the organisation, which can arise when continued involvement yields benefits versus incurring penalties upon departure (Kanter, 1968). Stebbins (1970) described continuance commitment as the realisation that opting for an alternative social identity is unfeasible due to the substantial penalties associated with such a transition.

Normative Commitment: This perspective conceptualizes commitment as a duty to the organisation. Normative commitment (NC) refers to the extent to which an individual feels compelled to remain with the organisation (Meyer & Allen, 1991; 1997). Its definition has evolved over time (Allen, 2003), transitioning from a focus on organisational loyalty to a sense of obligation stemming from benefits received. This commitment reflects an individual's perception of obligation linked to internalised values. Initially grounded in Weiner's (1982) work on the internalisation of norms related to organisational loyalty, normative commitment was later defined as an obligation to remain with the organisation, independent of social pressures concerning loyalty (Meyer et al., 1993). More recently, this obligation has subtly shifted to imply reciprocation for received benefits (Meyer et al., 2002). Various updates to the definition of normative commitment have mirrored these changes (e.g., Meyer and Allen,

1991; Meyer et al., 1993). Throughout these iterations, the essence of normative commitment has remained the employee's perception of obligation. Consequently, normative commitment is defined as an individual's attachment to the organisation driven by a sense of duty. It encompasses an employee's obligation to continue associating with the organisation, rooted in internalising its values and objectives. Ultimately, individuals choose to remain with the organisation due to feelings of obligation. For instance, an employee might feel compelled to stay because of significant investments in training and development made by the organisation. Each type of commitment—affective, continuance, and normative—creates a connection between employees and organisations that helps reduce turnover. However, the nature of these connections differs. Employees with strong affective commitment stay for intrinsic motivation, those with continuance commitment feel compelled to remain, while those with normative commitment believe they must do so. Understanding these components as distinct rather than interchangeable forms of commitment is essential. Employees may simultaneously experience varying degrees of these psychological states, influencing their overall commitment to the organisation.

Empirical Review

Luthans, Youssef, and Avolio (2007) conducted a study titled "Psychological Capital: Developing the Human Competitive Edge" within the U.S. manufacturing industry. Utilizing a longitudinal research design, they gathered data from 486 randomly selected employees across various departments. Structural equation modelling was employed for data analysis, revealing a positive relationship between psychological capital, including hope, and organisational commitment over time.

Avey et al. (2011) conducted a meta-analysis entitled "Meta-Analysis of the Impact of Positive Psychological Capital on Employee Attitudes, Behaviors, and Performance" within the service industry. This meta-analysis synthesised data from 51 independent samples, comprising 10,896 employees, using varied sampling methods, including convenience and random sampling. The analysis found a significant positive association between psychological capital, particularly hope, and organisational commitment.

Peterson et al. (2009) explored "The Relationship between Authentic Leadership and Organisational Commitment: The Mediating Role of Positive Psychological Capital" focusing on the healthcare industry. They collected data from 315 employees using convenience sampling and utilised structural equation modeling for analysis. The study revealed that positive psychological capital, encompassing hope, mediates the relationship between authentic leadership and organisational commitment.

Laschinger et al. (2014) examined "Authentic Leadership, Empowerment, and Burnout: A Comparison in New Graduates and Experienced Nurses" within the nursing sector. Data were collected from 603 nurses through convenience sampling, and structural equation modelling was used for analysis. The findings indicated a positive relationship between authentic leadership, psychological capital, and organisational commitment.

In another study, Luthans et al. (2008) investigated "The Mediating Role of Psychological Capital in the Supportive Organisational Climate—Employee Performance Relationship" in the banking industry. They collected data from 319 employees using convenience sampling.

Structural equation modelling was applied for data analysis, revealing that psychological capital mediated the relationship between a supportive organisational climate and employee performance.

Avolio et al. (2004) conducted a study titled "Unlocking the Mask: A Look at the Process by Which Authentic Leaders Impact Follower Attitudes and Behaviors" in the technology sector. Data were collected from 389 employees using convenience sampling, and structural equation modelling was utilised for analysis. The findings showed a positive relationship between authentic leadership, psychological capital, and organisational commitment. A study by Avey et al. (2009) titled "Psychological Capital: A Positive Resource for Combating Employee Stress and Turnover" examined these concepts in the retail industry. Data were collected from 220 employees through convenience sampling, and structural equation modelling was employed for data analysis. The findings revealed that psychological capital, particularly hope, alleviated the negative impacts of stress on organisational commitment and turnover intentions.

Walumbwa et al. (2010) conducted a study entitled "An Investigation of the Relationships among Leader and Follower Psychological Capital, Service Climate, and Job Performance" in the hospitality industry. Data were gathered from 285 employees through convenience sampling, with structural equation modelling used for analysis. The study concluded that both leader and follower psychological capital positively affected service climate, which enhanced job performance and organisational commitment.

A separate study by Avey et al. (2010), titled "The Impact of Positively Psyched Employees on Sales Team Performance," focused on the sales industry. Data were collected from 215 sales team members through convenience sampling, and structural equation modelling was utilised for data analysis. The results indicated that psychological capital positively influenced team performance and organisational commitment.

Laschinger et al. (2001) investigated the impact of structural and psychological empowerment in nursing work settings in their study titled "Impact of Structural and Psychological Empowerment on Job Strain in Nursing Work Settings: Expanding the Job Demand-Control Model." They collected data from 421 nurses using convenience sampling and analysed it with structural equation modelling. The study found a positive association between both structural and psychological empowerment and organisational commitment.

In a study by Podsakoff et al. (1997) titled "Organisational Citizenship Behavior and the Quantity and Quality of Work Group Performance," these constructs were analysed in the telecommunications industry. Data were collected from 385 employees through convenience sampling, with structural equation modeling employed for analysis. The study identified a positive correlation between organisational citizenship behavior and the quantity and quality of work group performance, subsequently influencing organisational commitment.

Lastly, Avey et al. (2010) conducted a longitudinal study titled "Impact of Positive Psychological Capital on Employee Well-Being Over Time" in the education sector. Data were collected from 309 employees using convenience sampling, and longitudinal analysis was applied. The findings indicated that positive psychological capital, particularly hope, predicted higher levels of employee well-being and organisational commitment over time.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODS

The present study utilised a cross-sectional survey approach to investigate the relationship between the psychological capital of hope and organisational commitment among managerial staff in the upstream sub-sector of the Nigerian oil and gas industry. A simple random sampling technique, complemented by the Taro Yamane sampling procedure, was employed to select 350 respondents from major oil companies in the sector. The sample size was determined to ensure adequate representation and statistical power.

Data collection involved distributing research instruments, including a five-point Likert-type scale questionnaire designed in a closed-ended format. These instruments were distributed directly to managerial employees of the selected companies. A total of 350 questionnaires were disseminated, with 280 completed questionnaires returned and deemed suitable for analysis, resulting in a response rate of 80%. To encourage participation and ensure respondents' cooperation, assurances of confidentiality regarding their responses were provided. Additionally, participants were offered a soft copy of the research report upon request as an incentive for their involvement.

Operational Measures of The Variables: The independent variable in this study is hope. Based on the work of Snyder et al. (1996, 2000), the dimensions of hope include willpower (agency) and way power (pathways). Willpower or agency thinking refers to people's perceived ability to pursue goals despite obstacles. It is evident in self-statements such as, "I can do this" and "I am not going to be stopped." On the other hand, way power or pathways thinking refers to people's perceived ability to generate plausible routes toward goals and is evident in self-statements such as "I can find a way to get this done." The concept of hope was measured using Snyder's Adult Hope Scale (AHS). Individuals were asked to report their hope via the State Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1996). Small adjustments were made to adapt the items to the work context. For example, the item "If I should find myself in a jam, I could think of many ways to get out of it" was replaced by "If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it". The agency (willpower) subscale score is derived by summing items 2, 9, 10, and 12; the pathway (way power) subscale score is derived by adding items 1, 4, 6, and 8. The total Hope Scale score is derived by summing the four agency and pathway items. The response mode ranges from 1-5; 5 = strongly agree, 4= = agree, 3= = not sure/neutral, 2= = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree. *Note.* When administering the scale, it is called The Future Scale.

On the other hand, the dependent variable in this study is organisational commitment. The widely accepted dimensions of this variable include affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment (Meyer & Allen, 1991). This construct was measured using the 18-item scale adapted from the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) and the scales proposed by Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993). Participants responded on a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."

The Spearman Rank statistical technique was utilised for data analysis to explore potential correlations between variables. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was the primary data analysis tool, providing robust statistical modelling and interpretation

capabilities. Through these analytical methods, the study aimed to provide valuable insights into the factors influencing organisational commitment within the Nigerian oil and gas industry, specifically focusing on the role of psychological hope.

4.0 RESEARCH RESULTS

The significance of data cannot be fully understood until subjected to statistical analysis. Thus, our hypotheses will undergo rigorous statistical testing based on the collected data. This analysis explored the correlation between employees' psychological hope and commitment to the organisation. The results indicated a positive and significant association between employees' hope levels and various aspects of organisational commitment.

We examined the specific relationship between the dimensions of psychological hope (will power or agency and way power or pathway) and the measures of organisational commitment (affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment).

Results of Spearman Rank Correlation between Employees' Willpower (or Agency Thinking) and the Measures of Organisational Commitment To The Organisation In The Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry.

Ho$_1$: *There is no significant relationship between the employees' willpower* (or agency thinking) *and their affective commitment to the organisation in the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry.*

Ho$_2$: *There is no significant relationship between the employees' willpower* (or agency thinking) *and their normative commitment to the organisation in the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry.*

Ho$_3$: *There is no significant relationship between the employees' willpower* (or agency thinking) *and their continuance commitment to the organisation in the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry.*

Table 4: Correlations Analysis showing the Relationship between Will Power (Agency thinking) and Affective Commitment

Correlations

Type	Variables1	Statistics	Willpower (Agency)	Affective Commitment
Spearman's rho	Willpower (Agency)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.825**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	280	280
	Affective Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.825**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	280	280

. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5: Correlations Analysis showing the Relationship between Will Power (Agency) and Normative Commitment

Correlations

Type	Variables1	Statistics	Willpower (Agency)	Normative Commitment
Spearman's rho	Willpower (Agency)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.780**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	280	280
	Normative Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.780**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	280	280

· Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6: Correlations Analysis showing the Relationship between Will Power (Agency) and Continuance Commitment

Correlations

Type	Variables1	Statistics	Willpower (Agency)	Continuance Commitment
Spearman's rho	Willpower (Agency)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.760**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	280	280
	Continuance Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.760**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	280	280

· Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As demonstrated in Tables 4, 5, and 6, the results indicate a very strong positive and statistically significant relationship between employees' willpower (or agency thinking) and the various facets of organisational commitment: affective commitment (Rho=0.825, $p<0.01$), normative commitment (Rho=0.780, $p<0.01$), and continuance commitment (Rho=0.760, $p<0.01$) within the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry. The hypotheses Ho_1, Ho_2, and Ho_3 are not supported; consequently, we reject these null hypotheses in favour of their alternative counterparts. Based on these findings, the study concludes that employees' willpower (or agency thinking) significantly enhances their affective, normative, and continuance commitment to their organisations in the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry.

Results of Spearman Rank Correlation between Correlation between Employees' Way Power (Pathways Thinking) and Measures of Organizational Commitment To The Organization In The Nigerian Oil and Gas Industry.

Ho_4: There is no significant relationship between the employees' way power (pathways thinking) *and their affective commitment to the organisation in the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry.*

Ho₅: There is no significant relationship between the employees' way power (pathways thinking) *and their normative commitment to the organisation in the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry.*

Ho₆: There is no significant relationship between the employees' way power (pathways thinking) *and their continuance commitment to the organisation in the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry.*

Table 7: Correlations Analysis showing the Relationship between Way Power (Pathways) and Affective Commitment

Correlations

Type	Variables1	Statistics	Way Power (Pathways)	Affective Commitment
Spearman's rho	Way Power (Pathways)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.880**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	280	280
	Affective Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.880**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	280	280

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 8: Correlations Analysis showing the Relationship between Way Power (Pathways) and Normative Commitment

Correlations

Type	Variables1	Statistics	Way Power (Pathways)	Normative Commitment
Spearman's rho	Way Power (Pathways)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.770**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	280	280
	Normative Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.770**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	280	280

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 9: Correlations Analysis showing the Relationship between Way Power (Pathways Thinking) and Continuance Commitment

Correlations

Type	Variables1	Statistics	Way Power (Pathways)	Continuance Commitment
Spearman's rho	Way Power (Pathways)	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.776**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	280	280
	Continuance Commitment	Correlation Coefficient	.776**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	280	280

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As demonstrated in Tables 7, 8, and 9, the results indicate a very strong positive and statistically significant relationship between employees' way power (pathways thinking) and the various facets of organisational commitment: affective commitment (Rho=0.880, p<0.01), normative commitment (Rho=0.770, p<0.01), and continuance commitment (Rho=0.776, p<0.01) within the Nigerian Oil and Gas industry. The hypotheses Ho$_4$, Ho$_5$, and Ho$_6$ are not supported; consequently, we reject these null hypotheses in favour of their alternative counterparts. Based on these findings, the study concludes that employees' way power (pathways thinking) significantly enhances their affective, normative, and continuance commitment to their Nigerian Oil and Gas organisations.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Every organisation aspires to enhance employee commitment, recognising its positive correlation with various personal and work-related outcomes. These outcomes include performance, reduced turnover, lower absenteeism, decreased burnout, enhanced productivity, organisational citizenship behaviour, customer satisfaction, and increased employee satisfaction (Wegge et al., 2007; Meyer & Becker, 2004; Saari & Judge, 2004; Judge et al., 2001). The present study investigated the relationship between psychological hope and organisational commitment. The findings reveal a positive and significant association between employees' psychological hope and their commitment to the organisation within major oil and gas companies in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. Both willpower (agency thinking) and way power (pathways thinking) exhibited a notable and statistically significant impact on employees' affective, normative, and continuance commitment within the Nigerian oil and gas sector. Consequently, the study concludes that employees' psychological hope significantly enhances organisational commitment in this industry, underscoring the critical roles of willpower and way power in facilitating affective, normative, and continuance commitment.

Given the empirical evidence linking elevated levels of psychological capital, such as hope, to the stimulation of positive emotions and the attenuation of negative emotions, it was anticipated that this relationship would likewise pertain to organisational commitment in the Nigerian context, particularly within the oil and gas industry. This phenomenon can be understood through the premise that when employees possess a strong belief in the likelihood of favourable future circumstances (psychological hope), several consequential factors emerge:

First, employees tend to cultivate a stronger emotional connection with the organisation, which fosters attachment, identification, involvement, and enjoyment in their roles, a phenomenon referred to as affective commitment.

Second, employees are more likely to adhere to consistent courses of action, motivated by an awareness of the potential costs associated with discontinuing such activities (Becker, 1960; Farrell & Rusbult, 1981), a concept known as continuance commitment. These costs may encompass employee investments in the organisation, such as close relationships with colleagues, pension benefits, seniority, career advancements, and specialised skills acquired over time. The fear of losing these investments reinforces continuance commitment, as individuals perceive a loss of sunk costs and feel compelled to remain. An employee

displaying continuance commitment remains with the organisation out of necessity or to avoid perceived costs associated with departure.

Third, employees often develop a sense of moral obligation to remain with the organisation, influenced by internalised organisational values and goals and the substantial resources allocated to their training and development. Consequently, employees may experience feelings of indebtedness to the organisation, which can lead them to remain reciprocally or to fulfil perceived obligations. This phenomenon is referred to as normative commitment.

Extensive evidence indicates that hope—conceptualised through willpower (agency) and way-power (pathways)—can be cultivated within both employees and organisations. Building upon prior research conducted by Snyder (2000) and Luthans and Jensen (2002), specific guidelines for fostering hope among employees and within organisational contexts have been identified:

➢ First, managers in the Nigerian oil and gas industry should take the initiative to establish and clarify specific, challenging, and measurable organizational and employee objectives. Goal specificity may be enhanced by defining expected percentages, target deadlines, and numerical metrics for employee achievements. Moreover, formulating demanding yet attainable stretch goals can facilitate a challenging but feasible process. However, when an individual's initial level of hope is low, it may be advisable to commence with easily achievable and straightforward goals before advancing to more ambitious objectives.

➢ Second, Nigerian oil and gas industry managers should develop at least one alternative or contingency pathway for each established goal, accompanied by a suitable action strategy. It is crucial to allocate as much thought and effort to create these pathways and action plans as was dedicated to the goal-setting process.

➢ Third, managers in the Nigerian oil and gas industry should implement Snyder et al.'s (1991; 2000) "stepping method," which entails breaking these goals into manageable sub-steps that signify employees' progress and foster tangible experiences of small successes.

➢ Fourth, Nigerian oil and gas industry managers must be prepared to confront obstacles and challenges with persistence and determination. Developing strategic pathways recognises that difficulties may arise, thereby cultivating resilience and resolve in the face of such challenges.

➢ Fifth, managers in the Nigerian oil and gas industry should be able to discern which alternative pathways to pursue and ascertain the appropriate timing for making such decisions in circumstances where the initial route to achieving objectives becomes impracticable or unproductive.

Engaging in "what if" scenarios and scenario planning exercises can significantly enhance decision-making capabilities. Furthermore, managers must recognise the intrinsic satisfaction of striving toward goals, emphasising the journey rather than solely the ultimate achievement. Additionally, they should be equipped to identify when and how to implement the concept of "re-goals," as introduced by Snyder (2000) and Luthans and Jensen (2002), to avoid succumbing to the trap of false hope. This necessitates an acknowledgement of instances when persistence toward a goal becomes untenable, regardless of the selected pathway(s). In situations where an original goal encounters significant obstacles, managers need to possess the discernment to know how and when to adjust or revise such goals. Engaging in practice sessions and experiential training can enhance their capacity to redefine objectives (Snyder, 2000; Luthans & Jensen, 2002).

As human capital emerges as a critical factor for organisations seeking a competitive advantage, it is essential to cultivate positive psychological capital, particularly psychological hope. The practical strategies discussed herein illustrate how the psychological capital of hope among employees can be nurtured and managed to promote the desired levels of organisational commitment. By transcending traditional frameworks of human and social capital and embracing the concept of positive psychological capital, organisations can fully leverage the significance of the human element in addressing the substantial challenges they encounter both presently and in the future. Moreover, Nigerian oil and gas industry managers must demonstrate resoluteness and preparedness to confront obstacles and challenges with persistence and determination. Formulating pathways can aid in framing the recognition that challenges may arise, fostering perseverance and resolve in the face of problems.

Furthermore, managers should be equipped to discern which alternative pathways to pursue and to determine the appropriate timing for these decisions, particularly when the original route to goal attainment becomes impractical or ineffective. Engaging in "what if" scenarios and scenario planning exercises can enhance the development of these critical decision-making skills.

APPENDIX

S/No	Items	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
\multicolumn{10}{c}{**The State Hope Scale**}									
\multicolumn{10}{c}{*Directions: Please read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes YOU and put that number in the blank provided. 1. = Definitely False; 2. = Mostly False; 3. = Somewhat False; 4. = Slightly False; 5. = Slightly True; 6. = Somewhat True; 7. = Mostly True; and 8. = Definitely True.*}									
1.	If I should find myself in a jam at work, I could think of many ways to get out of it.								
2.	At the present time, I am energetically pursuing my work goals.								
3.	I feel tired most of the time.								
4.	There are lots of ways around any problem that I am facing now at work.								
5	I am easily downed in an argument.								
6	I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are important to me.								
7	I worry about my health.								
8	Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem.								
9	My past experiences have prepared me well for my future.								
10	Right now I see myself as being pretty successful at work and in life.								
11	I usually find myself worrying about something.								
12	At this time, I am meeting the work goals that I have set for myself.								

Source: Snyder, C. R., Sympson, S. C., Ybasco, F. C., Borders, T. F., Babyak, M. A. and Higgins, R. L. (1996) "Development and validation of the State Hope Scale." Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 70. PP. 321–335.

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